

Francesco Petrarch (July 1304 - July 1374)

from *Rime Sparse*

original Italian

i

Voi ch'ascoltate in rime sparse il suono
di quei sospiri ond'io nudriva 'l core
in sul mio primo giovenile errore
quand'era in parte altr'uom da quel ch'ì sono,

A

B

B

A

del vario stile in ch'io piango et ragiono
fra le vane speranze e 'l van dolore,
ove sia chi per prova intenda amore,
spero trovar pietà, nonché perdono.

A

B

B

A

Ma ben veggio or sí come al popol tutto
favola fui gran tempo, onde sovente
di me mesdesmo meco mi vergogno;

C

D

E

et del mio vaneggiar vergogna è 'l frutto,
e 'l pentersi, e 'l conoscer chiaramente
che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno.

C

D

E

English translation

i

You who hear the sound, in scattered rhymes,
of those sighs on which I fed my heart,
in my first vagrant youthfulness,
when I was partly other than I am,

I hope to find pity, and forgiveness,
for all the modes in which I talk and weep,
between vain hope and vain sadness,
in those who understand love through its trials.

Yet I see clearly now I have become
an old tale amongst all these people, so that
it often makes me ashamed of myself;

and shame is the fruit of my vanities,
and remorse, and the clearest knowledge
of how the world's delight is a brief dream.

taken from:
<http://petrarch.petersadlon.com/canzoniere.html>

trans: A.S. Kline

Henry Howard (1517 – 19 January 1547)

Complaint of the Lover Disdained

In Cyprus springs, whereas Dame Venus dwelt, **A 5**
A well so hot, that whoso tastes the same, **B 5**
Were he of stone, as thawed ice should melt, **A 4.5**
And kindled find his breast with fixed flame; **B 4.5**
Whose moist poison dissolved hath my hate. **C 4.5**
This creeping fire my cold limbs so opprest, **D 5**
That in the heart that harbour'd freedom, late: **C 5**
Endless despair long thraldom hath imprest. **D 5**
Another so cold in frozen ice is found, **E 5.5**
Whose chilling venom of repugnant kind, **F 5**
The fervent heat doth quench of Cupid's wound, **E 5**
And with the spot of change infects the mind; **F 5**
 Whereof my dear hath tasted to my pain: **G 5**
 My service thus is grown into disdain. **G 5**

Description of Spring, Wherein Every Thing Renews,

Save Only the Lover || an experimental form

The soote season, that bud and blome forth bringes, **A 5**
With grene hath clad the hill, and eke the vale: **B 5**
The nightingale with fethers new she sings: **A 5**
The turtle to her make hath tolde her tale: **B 5**
Somer is come, for every spray nowe springes: **A 5**
The hart hath hung his olde head on the pale: **B 5**
The buck in brake his winter cote he flings: **A 5**
The fishes flote with newe repaired scale: **B 5**
The adder all her sloughe away she slinges: **A 5**
The swift swallow pursueth the flyes smale: **B 5**
The busy bee her honye now she minges: **A 5**
Winter is worne that was the flowers bale: **B 5**
And thus I see among these pleasant things **A 5**
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs. **A 5**

1. *soote*: sweet

4. *turtle*: turtledove; make: mate

6. *his olde head*: i.e. his antlers; *pale*: fence post

7. *brake*: bushes

9. *sloughe*: skin

11. *minges*: mingles; mixes

12: *bale*: evil; harm; misfortune; woe; misery; sorrow

Emund Spencer (1552 — 1599)

from *Amoretti*

IX

Long while I sought to what I might compare **A**
Those powerful eyes, which lighten my dark sight, **B**
Yet find I nought on earth to which I dare **A**
Resemble th' image of their goodly light. **B**
Not to the sun, for they do shine by night; **B**
Nor to the moon, for they are changed never; **C**
Nor to the stars, for they have purer sight; **B**
Nor to the fire, for they consume not ever; **C**
Nor to the lightning, for they still persever; **C**
Nor to the diamond, for they are more tender; **D**
Nor unto crystal, far nought may them sever; **C**
Nor unto glass, such baseness might offend her; **D**
Then to the Maker self they likest be, **E**
Whose light doth lighten all that here we see. **E**

William Shakespeare (1564 — 1616)

from *The Sonnets*

126

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power **A**
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his fickle hour; **A**
Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st **B**
Thy lovers withering, as thy sweet self grow'st. **B**
If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack, **C**
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back, **C**
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill **D**
May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill. **D**
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure! **E**
She may detain, but not still keep, her treasure: **E**
Her audit (though delayed) answered must be, **F**
And her quietus is to render thee. **F**

Spencer, Edmund. *English Sixteenth-Century Verse: An Anthology*.
Richard S. Sylvester, ed. NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1974. Print.

Shakespeare, William. *The Sonnets and Narrative Poems:
The Complete Non-Dramatic Poetry*. Sylvan Barnet, ed.
NY: Signet Classic, Penquin Books, 1989. Print.